

Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment in Disasters Workshop

Oslo, Norway

8 – 10 April 2003

Workshop Report

Prepared by Paul Thompson

InterWorks

116 North Few St.

Madison, WI 53703 USA

Tel. 1 608 251 9440

Thompson@InterWorksMadison.com

Table of contents

Background	1
The program	2
Analysis of evaluation results	7
Recommendations for future REA training	8
Annex 1: Evaluation results	9
Annex 2: Memo from Charles Kelly re: observations of Oslo REA Workshop	14
Annex 3: Participants' List	21

Background

CARE International and the Benfield Hazard Research Centre, University College London, have prepared a methodology to assess the impact on the environment, first of disasters and then of the disaster survivors. The purpose of this exercise has been to develop a method or an approach for NGOs and donors to develop disaster response programs that take into account the environment, thereby lessening negative impacts. This methodology has now been articulated within a draft *Guidelines for Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment in Disasters*. These guidelines have been field tested in Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Indonesia. The lessons learned from the field study have been fed back into revisions of the *Guidelines* as well as into the design of a training program to bring the concepts, principles and practices of this topic to field practitioners.

CARE Norway, which has identified environmental issues as a priority within its overall mission, financed and hosted the pilot workshop for the topic Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment in Disasters (referred to simply as REA). The workshop was held from 8 – 10 April in Oslo.

There were a total of 12 participants who attended the workshop with some people taking leaves to attend to schedule conflicts. We averaged 10 participants throughout the workshop. Of these, three were from CARE Norge, five were from other Norwegian NGOs, one was from CARE Madagascar and one each from an NGO based in Switzerland, Honduras and Ecuador.

The lead workshop facilitator was Paul Thompson from InterWorks, who, along with his colleagues, developed the training materials for the workshop. Becky Myton, an environmental specialist from CARE Honduras was co-facilitator. Charles Kelly, the lead technical specialist for this project from the beginning, was present as an observer and also served as a resource person and facilitated one session.

The workshop was held within the offices of NORAD in downtown Oslo. We had a conference room within a suite of conference spaces. Lunch was served in the NORAD cafeteria on the first day and sandwiches were catered for lunch the final two days. The facility and training equipment proved adequate for our group.

The program

The objectives for the workshop participants were as follows:

- Describe the purpose and rationale of the REA
- Describe how disasters and the environment are interconnected
- Be able to implement all four modules of an REA in an emergency situation
- Be able to make recommendations on disaster response programming that take into consideration REA results

Participant evaluations completed at the end of the workshop indicated the objectives were met, although the final objective was under emphasized.

The following outlines what occurred in the sessions and notes issues for changes in future workshops. (Many of the comments regarding the sessions are taken from Charles Kelly's observations notes.)

Day 1

1.1 Welcome

Gunnar Andersen, CARE Norge Country Director, opened the workshop with a welcome and comments about the importance of environmental issues overall and for CARE Norge. Each of the participants introduced themselves by describing briefly their experience in either disaster management, environmental programming or assessments. Paul presented the objectives and plan for the workshop.

1.2 The environment-disaster connection

This session intends to set the stage for the workshop by drawing out of the participants their awareness of the linkages between the environment and disasters. Becky facilitated this session, introducing the topic with the slides. She implemented the mini-case studies

provided in the participant's workbook, dividing the participants into 2 groups and assigned Part A of 2 mini case studies to each group. Each group required 20 minutes to prepare their analysis of the case, about 20 more to report and discuss their conclusions in plenary. They were then given Part B to each case study, but had time for only one case, before reporting back to plenary. The discussions proved effective at identifying participant's level of knowledge of the field as well as raising awareness regarding previously unrecognized linkages between disasters and the environment. Becky closed with a short discussion on the cost of failure to recognize these linkages.

1.3 REA conceptual framework

Paul facilitated this session, which was challenging in that it was the most "lecture intensive" of all the sessions. Using the slides, Paul led a discussion about the framework, modules and elements of the REA concept and methodology. Relief to this approach was achieved by dividing the participants into four groups and assigning each one to analyze a key section on implementing the REA from the Guidelines. Each group reported their summary to plenary. (Comments were made in the evaluation that this was an appreciated activity, which had the benefit of engaging the participants with the Guidelines, one of the purposes of the workshop.)

1.4 Disaster management context

Paul introduced the topic using the slides. The participants then did an exercise to identify who are the disaster management actors, their roles and responsibilities relative to the four phases of disaster management: preparedness, response, rehabilitation/reconstruction and mitigation. The exercise went well. However, the session overall ran long and there was not time to conclude with the presentation on the linkages between disasters and development.

1.5 Basic assessment reporting

Paul asked the participants to work in 4 small groups to discuss the who, why, when, where of assessments instead of delivering this content in a lecture. The results were very satisfactory. He then presented, with slides, the process of assessment, the tools, techniques and methodologies of assessment. Overall the session went well, but as we were running a bit late the discussion was shortened.

1.6 Participant feedback

We asked the participants to form two groups and evaluate the first day of the workshop in terms of: what went well and what could be improved. Both groups took over a half hour to do this, perhaps engaging more in discussions related to the workshop (as was reported) than to critiquing the day. Overall the majority of their comments indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the first day. Suggestions for improvements included: 1. provide handouts of the slides, 2. more pictures and symbols to illustrate the material, 3. the facilitators should be more critical in feedback of participants' work/discussions, 4. provide better definitions of terms, especially "primary" and "secondary" effects of disasters 5. place more emphasis on the importance of the environment in disasters.

This last point proves to be a major philosophical issue: is the REA essentially about how to provide humanitarian assistance in the most environmentally friendly fashion possible or should the REA treat the environment with the same level of purpose as humanitarian assistance.

Day 2

2.1 Review of Day 1

This review was accomplished by Paul reading to the group the results of the feedback session at the end of Day 1 and noting how the facilitators were endeavoring to address the requests for improvements/changes.

2.2 Module One: Context statement

Paul briefly presented the purpose of the context statement using the slides. There are six questions and each slide of the six questions contains a question for the participants that require their analysis of how to achieve answering the context question. After this discussion, participants reviewed a context statement from the Ethiopia REA field test to examine how a “real one” looks.

This session should have emphasized that the context statement can be prepared by the REA leader before the meeting of the organization group. The purpose of the meeting, therefore, is to develop consensus on the statement.

2.3 Factors influencing environmental impacts

Becky explained the purpose and outcome of this element of module one, i.e., the completion of Rating Form 1. For the exercise, Becky divided the participants into 3 groups, each taking 1/3 of the factors on the form, and then answering the questions posed in the exercise. The participants then undertook the exercise in the workbook, averaging the scores of two groups from the Indonesia case study and then identifying the three priority factors.

In the future it would be important to use this session to present the methodology of completing this and the following rating forms, i.e., the mechanics of voting and averaging results, deciding on which metric to establish as the common basis for analysis among all groups. Similarly, it is important to note the time in which the forms are expected to be completed.

2.4 Possible immediate environmental impacts of hazards

Becky again explained the purpose and outcome of this element of module 1, using the slides to illustrate how to complete Rating Form 2. The participants undertook the exercise successfully.

This session illustrated how difficult it was for participants to keep track of where the various elements of the training documents and the guidelines were all located. This proved frustrating during the workshop. The exercise for Form 2 needs to include information which

permits participants to list some hazards as “unknown”, as well as a map to illustrate the situation better.

2.5 Unmet basic needs

Paul presented the purpose and outcome of the unmet based needs rating form. The concept of assessing this rating form is based in the application of Sphere standards, a topic that is outside the knowledge and experience of most participants. Therefore the session included a 20 minute overview of the Sphere standards to set the stage for implementing the exercise.

The exercise was a good problem solving example except that it took about 20 more minutes than planned.

In the future it would be important to reinforce the point that when disaster survivors have unmet basic needs, they may turn to the environment to meet those needs. This needs to be anticipated in disaster response programming.

2.6 Identification of potential negative environmental consequences of possible relief activities

Paul opened the session with the purpose and outcome of this element of Module one, the analysis and completion of Rating Form 4. The participants then implemented the exercise of evaluating a project proposal against criteria of environmental considerations. The exercise was done in plenary and the discussion was very productive.

2.7 Participant experience

One participant volunteered to present her project, which was about systematically analyzing disaster impacts on the environment and creating environmental mitigation programming to address the negative consequences of these disasters.

Day 3

3.1 Review of day 2

Becky incorporated the review of Day 2 in her following presentation.

3.2 Module Two: Community level assessment

Becky reviewed the objectives of the community level assessment and then used the slides to present the scope of the issues related to implementing this module. Becky focused on using the questionnaire as the vehicle to collect information at the community level. The discussion generated by the presentation took longer than planned, requiring that the group exercise be curtailed. So, each of the four groups were asked to read the scenario and answer only the first two questions posed to their group, instead of the four in the exercise. The discussion proved valuable.

In future workshops, the use of the questionnaire should be de-emphasized and there should be more discussion of the alternative forms of information collection. (See also Kelly's notes on this session in Annex 2.)

3.3 Module Three: Consolidation and analysis

This is a critical session as this is where all the information from the other modules is pulled together turned into actionable activities. Paul presented the process, using the slides, and asked the participants to undertake the exercise. This required reading a new scenario and answering the analytical questions. As with the previous session, there was not enough time for all four questions, so the groups only responded to the first two questions.

For future workshops, it would be helpful to emphasize up front and demonstrate the simplicity of the end results that are needed and to show that getting there is a lot simpler than the module one elements seem to suggest. Also, the scenario for the exercise should be redrafted to be a continuation of the previous scenario and be kept as short as possible.

3.4 Module Four: Green review of relief procurement

This module has a stand-alone quality as the rest of the REA methodology does not depend on it nor does green procurement depend on REA. But it is a very appropriate culminating message to demonstrate an application of the principles of REA. Becky asked participants to read the quotes on green procurement in the guidelines to emphasize the concept behind them. She then lead the group through a theoretical analysis of the pros and cons of buying 5000 wooden spoons versus 5000 plastic spoons. (The exercise backfired a little bit, as the analysis was not conclusive.)

One of the participants had personal experience with green procurement and presented his case study, which was a very good illustration of the principles of the topic.

Future workshops should include a clear example of successful implementation of green procurement practices.

3.5 REA implementation issues

As the "in-house" expert on implementation of REA, Kelly agreed to step out of his role as observer and present his thoughts on the key issues of how to plan, organize and implement an REA process. He responded to many questions from participants and demonstrated a sample calendar of how long it took to implement the Indonesia REA field test. This was a very helpful conclusion to the workshop.

3.6 Evaluation and closing

The results of the evaluation are found in Annex 1 of this report.

Analysis of evaluation results

Ten participants completed the evaluation form. Their collective evaluation is particularly helpful in identifying those elements of the workshop that seem right and work well and identifying areas that need improvement or clarification.

Regarding the evaluation's first sections (items 1-15) about the workshop's organization, methodology and materials, 14 of the 15 categories received an average score of 4.2 or above (out of 5). This reflects a high degree of satisfaction. The highest score was 4.9 for "Participants were encouraged to take an active part," and the lowest score was 3.8 for "lecture method." It is interesting to note that these two "learning methods" are at opposite ends of the spectrum of "hands-on" learning and the lecture end of the spectrum did not fair that well, although 3.8 is not a low score.

Participants were unanimous that the length of the workshop was "correct." Eight out of 10 felt there were "just enough participants" and 2 felt there were "too few."

In the category of "3 most important things you learned during the workshop, virtually all mentioned "learning how to apply REA." Other comments focused on linking REA to EIA and the disaster/environment linkages.

There were many suggestions for improving the course, all of which are recorded in Annex 1. Some of these suggestions are also cited below under "Recommendations" and all of the rest bear consideration for improving the next iteration of the workshop. The most challenging suggestion was to add a fourth day to conduct a field simulation of implementing an REA.

Under the category of "any other comments," the participants were very supportive of the value of the experience and reflected satisfaction. Their additional recommendations for improvement are on target and will be incorporated in future changes.

For the overall rating of the course, 2 participants rated it "excellent," 7 rated it "very good" and 1 as "good." For a pilot that indicates a relatively high degree of success.

Each session was rated in terms of "quality" and "value to my work." No session scored below 3.3, and several sessions scored in the 4.5 – 4.6 range. There is a message to the facilitators here to especially strive to sharpen the sessions that scored below 4.0.

Lastly, the evaluation asked "Has this workshop prepared you adequately to implement the REA?" Of the 7 responders, five seemed to say a clear "yes" and the remaining two were more tentative, but did not say "no."

An overall analysis of the evaluation indicates that the workshop was well received by the participants, that it met their individual objectives, that they learned the workshop content to an adequate degree and that there are many opportunities to improve the workshop even more.

Recommendations for future REA training

1. The workshop discussions raised the awareness of the facilitators and the REA technical specialist (Kelly) that there is ambiguity about the purpose of REA. Participants from environmental NGOs were disappointed that REA was more about meeting the needs of disaster survivors than about protecting the environment. They argued the scope of REA should be expanded to include more environmental protection objectives. This issue needs to be clarified by the REA “management”.
2. Annex 2 of this report is Kelly’s memo prepared after the workshop that identifies issues and opportunities for improvement for the REA workshop and the *Guidelines*. Since most comments are detailed and session-specific they cannot be easily summarized, nor will they be repeated in this section. Each of these points should be taken into account and accommodated in the updating of the REA materials.
3. The preceding account of each session includes many recommendations specific to that session. They are not repeated in this section of overall recommendations.
4. In addition the evaluation results, Annex 1, include a section on suggestions for workshop improvements. They are regarded as recommendations that should be incorporated, to the extent possible, in future modifications to the REA training.
5. The organization of the workshop materials was awkward with three documents, two of which were bound together, but without continuous pagination. Some of the forms to be used by participants were difficult to find, leading to confusion.

The materials need to be reorganized so that each of the elements of the materials flow in the same order/sequence of the workshop agenda. In addition, the materials need more graphic elements to help communicate the concepts. The participants’ workbook might also include a copy of the reduced sized overheads to facilitate note taking.

6. Add to the glossary: environment, primary and secondary disaster effects.

Annex 1: Evaluation results

Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment in Disasters

Workshop Evaluation Results

Please circle to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	AVE. SCORE
1. Subject matter was adequately covered	5	4	3	2	1	4.2
2. Content was suitable for my background and experience	5	4	3	2	1	4.5
3. Program was well-paced	5	4	3	2	1	4.3
4. Training materials were relevant	5	4	3	2	1	4.5
5. Participants were encouraged to take an active part	5	4	3	2	1	4.9
6. The program met my individual objectives	5	4	3	2	1	4.4
7. Program was relevant to my job	5	4	3	2	1	4.3
8. I would recommend this program to my colleagues	5	4	3	2	1	4.2

Please rate the following, as applicable (5=excellent to 1=poor).

9. Lecture method	5	4	3	2	1	3.8
10. Facilitation team	5	4	3	2	1	4.6
11. Small group sessions	5	4	3	2	1	4.7
12. Meeting space	5	4	3	2	1	4.2
13. Meals/refreshments	5	4	3	2	1	4.2
14. Overall organization	5	4	3	2	1	4.2
15. Other participants	5	4	3	2	1	4.7

16. Was the seminar length: correct? **10** too short? **0** too long? **0**

17. Were there: just enough participants? **8** too few? **2** too many? **0**

18. What are the 3 most important things you learned during the workshop?

1. Familiarity with REA tools. Similarities between REA & IEEs/EAs. Contact with like minded people.
2. Application of REA. Green procurement.
3. The direct connection between humanitarian needs and impact on the environment. Assessing these.

4. To make/do a rapid impact assessment in disasters. It is important to make/do and EIA a long time before the REA.
5. What REA is. How the method can be used.
6. Not being afraid of taking a lead and do this kind of work. Systematized/structured my own scattered knowledge. Learned methodology and issues relations.
7. REA methodology. Link to EIA. Disaster role in environmental impact.
8. About REA & how to use it. The complexity of an emergency situation. The link between emergency and environments.
9. Awareness of the need for being prepared to handle emergencies. All the different priority focuses: nature, humans. How to use the REA.

19. What suggestions do you have for improving this course?

1. Seek ways to get participants more included; many questions to group went unanswered. Keep workshop objectives and conceptual flow always in forefront – put on wall. Send out first ten pages of REA Guidelines to participants 1-2 weeks ahead of workshop.
2. Do stronger emphasis of the course objectives. Fewer PowerPoint slides. Do not rush through – fewer issues might have been better to emphasize the course objectives. A more clearly defined target group; (e.g., HQ policy makers, field staff).
3. Even more operational work, maybe an extra day with a full simulation of an REA carried out in the field.
4. More time to do the exercises. Put the materials together so that it is simpler for the participants to find the various tables and forms.
5. Participant workbook should be organized in such a way that everything (including case studies and practicals) are placed under 1 heading in a logical way. Example: organization level assessment: module 1; all case studies under this heading + all questionnaires, forms, etc. follow each other. No need to divide the workbook in 2!! Referring to first half or second half of workbook!!
6. More focus should be given to the practical issues. More time for group discussion, problem-solving and practical exercises. Guidelines and workbook should be implemented in one manual. Workbook should not be divided into two sections. Page numbers should be consecutive throughout the book.
7. Some people asked that environment (ecology) should take a more prominent place. Pedagogically, I agree to this. But environment is not really a functional category, and therefore is best handled as you did it. However, a checklist of “environment in disaster situations” could be very useful, especially where you need to call on further expertise. In my work, I use such “working-checklists” and “translate” them into functional areas in order to place or locate responsibility for solving the issue (etc.). Very useful, very handy.
8. English is my mother tongue and therefore the terms used in REA were easily understood. Also a background from EIA assisted this understanding. None the less, a good intro to terminology and the like throughout the process would be useful in non-English workshop groups. Repetition was excellent and realize time constraints limited additional repeats, but amount of info was at times so great that one got lost; possibly home reading assignment would help us keep on course.
9. At the beginning of the course you should try to go over all the parts of REA, especially all the rating forms and what their purpose is. This is important to get a general view and understand the REA better (bigger picture)

20. Any other comments? (If you need more space, please use the back.)

1. Overall, I give the workshop high marks. Facilitators were very knowledgeable and likeable; much appreciated. The tone and camaraderie were very positive, very useful. Just a bit slower and less dynamic than I would prefer. Excellent materials were developed and shared.
2. I think that the REA needs a) to be streamlined because it aims to confuse with too many dimensions; b) it is not too clear if it aims at improved humanitarian action (it does, I believe) or at improved environmental aspects in emergencies; in other words too unspecific for environmental actors and too much focus on environmental for humanitarian actors; c) more clearly define environment.
3. Possibly a follow-up workshop, preferably after the org. have tired out the REA tool.
4. This is a RAPID EA in disasters. Even though the word "environment" is quite prominent here, the exercise is mainly for putting in place measures addressing disaster problems vis-à-vis humans. How quickly can we put in place measures which alleviate or reduce suffering among disaster victims? To avoid confusing REA with EIA, I would suggest calling REA "Rapid Disaster Assessment" RDA.
5. Enjoyed it very much!
6. Sharing of experience and background related to similar assignments very useful. Group work and breaks useful for this purpose and could be encouraged.
7. Very positive: the Guide and the workbook (maybe the quick reference should be placed in the Guidebook or in a third book). Very positive: the introduction of the participants the first day, and all the exercises; I feel that the atmosphere and collaboration in the group is really good. Very positive: The evaluation the first day; I think it was smart with doing it in small groups – with one reporting to you.
8. The last question in the closing session was maybe not so necessary.

21. What is your overall rating of this course?

Excellent ☐
2

Very good ☐
7

Good ☐
1

Fair ☐
0

Poor ☐
0

Please rate the individual workshop sessions

5 = Excellent 4 = Good 3 = Average 2 = Poor 1 = Unacceptable 0 = Does not apply

Session No. & Title	Quality	AVE. SCORE	Value to my Work	AVE. SCORE
1.1 Welcome & Objectives	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.3	5 4 3 2 1 0	3.3
1.2 The environment – disaster connection	5 4 3 2 1 0	3.9	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.5
1.3 REA conceptual framework	5 4 3 2 1 0	3.9	5 4 3 2 1 0	3.8
1.4 Disaster management context	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.3	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.6
1.5 Basic assessment reporting	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.0	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.2
2.2 Module One: context statement	5 4 3 2 1 0	3.6	5 4 3 2 1 0	3.6
2.3. Factors influencing environmental impacts	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.3	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.6
2.4 Possible immediate environmental impacts	5 4 3 2 1 0	3.8	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.4
2.5 Unmet basic needs	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.5	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.4
2.6 Potential negative consequences of possible relief activities	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.0	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.6
2.7 Participant experience	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.5	5 4 3 2 1 0	3.3
3.2 Module Two: community level assessment	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.3	5 4 3 2 1 0	3.8
3.3 Module Three: consolidation and analysis	5 4 3 2 1 0	3.8	5 4 3 2 1 0	3.8
3.4 Module Four: green review and relief procurement	5 4 3 2 1 0	3.5	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.4
3.5 REA implementation issues	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.0	5 4 3 2 1 0	4.8

Has this workshop prepared you adequately to implement the REA?

1. Yes, it's well thought through system which lives from those who have used it.
2. I think the workshop will help me implement the REA in Madagascar, although it already exists there, but there are gaps in the current system.
3. I would say so. Perhaps not alone yet, but I could definitely feel comfortable in an REA team.
4. Yes. Score it a 5.
5. Yes and no. Have the necessary tools, but to provide a good result will require further study and/or guidance in walking through the procedures.
6. I'm not sure (maybe it's because I am writing this before the last session) but at the moment I have a problem with seeing the whole picture – and I don't understand that this is a rapid methodology. I think that one of the reasons that I (at the moment) don't feel fully prepared to do REA is my lack of field experience. Maybe it would have been helpful with one extra day at the end of the course, where the participant is given a case study and should use the REA method, with all the modules.... All the exercises during the workshop were necessary and good, but maybe an additional case

study at the end??? But as I already mentioned, I think this opinion is due mainly to my lack of experience. Thank you for an interesting intervention to REA, and I will try to incorporate this in our work.

7. I think this is the base, I think that Charles Kelly has offered his help in assisting us.

Annex 2: Memo from Charles Kelly re: observations of Oslo REA Workshop

April 14, 2003

To: Paul Thompson
From: C. Kelly
cc: Jock Baker, Mario Pareja

Subject: REA Training in Oslo

This memo provides feed-back and comments on the REA training in Oslo as well as identification as to possible changes in the REA Guidelines to improve application and user-friendliness. This input should be considered as rough notes quickly provided as input for the Guatemala training.

I. General Comments

The workshop went well despite concern that there would not be enough participants. A total of 10 persons participated from beginning to end of the three days. This number was appropriate for a testing of a new training module and given the background of the participants.

The level of participation and interest were high. Most of the participants had not had any disaster emergency experience, and at least one had no development experience either. In general the participants were more environment than disaster oriented.

We need to anticipate the initial reaction of participants to the REA. The environment is an emotive subject. Participants with a strong environmental perspective are likely to question at the beginning of the workshop why the environment is not given top billing in the REA (a comment made at the workshop). It is likely (to be confirmed in Guatemala) that at the beginning of a workshop participants with a strong disaster/humanitarian assistance perspective will question the length and resulting additional workload created by the REA.

A workshop leader will need to anticipate the perspectives of participants and develop specific strategies to address initial negative reactions which may surface. An option may be to provide some examples of avoidable negative environment impact in a disaster or examples of how the REA has been useful (admittedly few at present) early on the first day of the training. This can be combined with a soliciting from participants' examples negative disaster-environment impacts and asking how these impacts could have been avoided.

Of note, language didn't seem to pose a serious problem in the workshop. Only one person was not fluent in English but could read and understand English fairly well. Another participant or I translated as needed when this person needed language support.

Still, there were a couple of English phrases (e.g., "secondary effects") which stumped some participants otherwise quite comfortable in English. Aside from building a multi-lingual REA dictionary, it just seems the workshop leader is going to have to pay attention to looks to confusion to make sure the words and phrases used in the REA is being understood.

II. Comments on Training Activities and Materials

1. Overall the training materials are well organized and presented. A check of section numbering is needed and there were some concerns that certain tables might be lacking from some copies of the Participant's workbook, but these are not minor editorial problems.

2. Addition of graphics to the materials would improve user friendliness. (The lack of graphics in the materials used in Oslo was actually due to a tight production schedule for the workshop).
3. The disaster management presentation was good.
4. Some of the verbal introductions to REA modules and sections were very concise but may have been too short for some participants to provide sufficient introduction to a topic.
5. More information may be needed in some case studies. The first part of one study is only a couple of sentences long. This made it unclear what the participants were expected to do.
6. There is no need to dumb down the case studies. But it should not be presumed that participants have strong backgrounds in humanitarian assistance, so sufficient information is needed for the inexperienced.
7. Some of the presentations could be taped (e.g., on disaster management) for use on a DVD or over the Internet.
8. There may need to be more emphasis on Module 2 in the introduction to the workshop to avoid an impression that Module One is all there is to the REA.
9. Does there need to be more discussion about the focus of the REA on human impact rather than environmental impact? Is the title misleading and giving the impression that the REA will only focus on damage to the environment and not predominantly focus on the human links? I think this point needs to be reviewed after the Guatemala workshop.
10. Does a complex disaster need special modules? Answer is no, but this may need to be included in the introduction.
11. An early discussion of the ideal composition of an assessment team is important. This discussion should highlight that specialists are useful, but not necessary for the REA. Also, the point, identified by UNHCR, that a specialist may bias the result, should be noted.
12. The fact that the scale and timing of the REA should be adjusted to the scale and timing of a disaster should be mentioned.
13. The difference between an EIA and REA should be noted. Reference to the IAIA site for information on EIAs could be included, as well as use of the development/disaster table highlighting the differences between EIA and REA which is used at the beginning of the Guidelines. Feedback suggests that this table is a good visual way to show the differences between development and disaster impact assessments.
14. It may be useful to include presentation methods (e.g., voting and averaging) as part of each element in Module One, rather than covering methods at the end of the training. Maybe a role-play can be used to show how to complete a Module One rating form in a group setting as a way to introduce methods and solicit ideas on methods from the participants.
15. It may be useful to note that there is a lot of information available on the environment, even in a disaster and the REA is an easy way to organize and make sense of this information.
16. It is important to note that the Context Statement and other parts of Element One of Module One can be prepared beforehand and reviewed by the group, instead of have the group jointly draft the statement and identify sources of information or environmentally unique sites.
17. There is a need to note the time in which the forms are expected to be completed.

18. Add a map of Surima exercise.
19. Emphasize the need to have a common scales and procedures when breaking a large group into smaller groups for completing forms.
20. Create a better example of small/medium/large.
21. On the question as to what should be done about low before disaster unmet needs, suggest it is up to each organization to decide, but disaster assistance is usually only intended to return to levels before the disaster.
22. In the unmet needs review, the focus is not on degree of change but on absolute need after a disaster.
23. Add a definition of the environment, or ask for one from the participants, or both. (One used for the Sphere project can be used. Mario can provide it.)
24. Good use of a review of Module One at beginning of Module Two. A similar “where are we and where did we come from” would be useful elsewhere in the training.
25. Per Solberg’s suggestion, a road map or chart of the REA would be useful to show participants where they are at in the process, particularly in Modules One and Two, and for progress review and recall.
26. Need to note that there are resources listed at end of REA Guidelines.
27. Focus on the fact that the “questionnaire” is guide to information needed, not obligatory document or process. Note that other sources of information can be used to complete the summary form at the end of Module Two.
28. Emphasize the need to pre-test any questionnaire and adjust as appropriate.
29. Training Section 3.2: Start with data collection options and then mention the questionnaire. Emphasis should be given to extracting needed information from existing field-collect data or as part of other field surveys if possible before going for a stand-alone use of the questionnaire for field data collection.
30. Present the Community Data analysis form before questionnaire and link the form to process and results of Module One.
31. The way the Community REA is presented may encourage users to try too much for a rapid community assessment. Need to temper options with realism, but provide sufficient information to allow more detail and field work when possible.
32. Need to mention that the REA is based, in part, on the expectation that survivors who can’t meet this basic needs through normal means may go to the environment to meet these needs. May need to assemble some examples of this.
33. A good approach is to have a qualified trainee to talk about community data collection if one is available. Incorporating participants into other parts of the workshop should also be encouraged.
34. Issues can be consolidated “vertically” as well as between the Organization and Community results. (Section 3.3)

35. It is not necessary to do a report at the end of the REA (Section 3.3). In a disaster it may be best to move directly from the assessment results to project design (e.g., Ethiopia) or revision of operations (e.g., Indonesia).

36. Is the Indonesian matrix in Section 3.3 used as an example of how to use REA results, too confusing? It can be shortened and simplified, or dropped. But it did prove useful in the field.

37. All exercises should have a problem solving component if possible. This seems to hold participant's interest better than exercises where the focus is only on information extraction, i.e., answering questions based on reading a summary of information.

38. There is a need for good examples for the Green Procurement module. Using examples which make it unclear whether green procurement is good is counter productive. These examples should focus on disaster rather than normal procurement.

For instance, posing the question as to whether buying 20 motor bikes or 20 bicycles for field staff who need to travel less than 10 km per day makes the green procurement point. Similarly, whether to buy a 5km/liter or a 20 km/liter vehicle for in town travel makes the same green procurement point, and a cost-effectiveness one too.

39. Can a typical or model schedule of a REA "assessment" can be provided, but noting that there is not always a need to do a community level assessment.

40. The exercise for Form 2 (hazards) needs to include information which permits participants to list some hazards as "unknown". A map and more spatial details would improve the exercise.

41. Given the nature of some of the questions posed during the workshop, is a REA specialist always going to be needed at each training?

III. REA Guidelines and Process Comments

1. Is the REA focus on human impact on the environment not more directly on the state of the environment correct?

2. Does the first part of the Context section need 3 paras instead of 2 to make it easier to complete?

3. Should there be a reference to professionalism and the IAIA and NGO Code of Conduct?

4. Form 1 may need some changes. One group found that the implications column for:

Duration: did not always apply.

Concentration: did not always apply.

Distance: did not apply.

Expectations: did not apply.

5. The language for Sustainable Resource Availability is too confusing and needs to be revised.

6. In Form 2 is there a need to switch yes (2) and unknown (1) to make unknown the higher number?

7. Clarify whether Form 2 refers to the spatial area or population affected. (It is the former.)

8. Note that users can add in hazards as well as deleting them.

9. Is the room for an "unknown" hazard?

10. Review unmet needs ratings before disaster. Can there be any confusion? Should the fact that the focus is on post-disaster needs be noted on the form?
11. Indicators for Unmet needs may just be confusing. Could they be eliminated, or would this then force those doing the assessment to develop their own situation-specific indicators.
12. Are the items listed under unmet needs sufficient, or are there too many?
13. Should a definition of “environment” be added (e.g., the one from Sphere), or should users be allowed to develop their own?
14. Change BGHRC reference to BenfieldHRC in Resources section.
15. Are there too many questions in the Community Assessment analysis form?
16. The meeting management section (Annex C) needs to be completed.
17. Should alternate energy be added to Green Procurement matrix?
18. Can the REA be streamlined (significantly shortened and simplified) to a level of optimal ignorance? Is all the information requested in the REA necessary? How do we decide what to remove and still have the REA applicable to most disasters under most environmental conditions?
19. The REA has a weak focus on the environment alone, and a strong focus on the impact of humans on the disaster and humans on the environment. A box on disaster-environment linkages may be useful for those with an overriding concern about the environment. On the other hand, the REA is intended to be used to support humanitarian assistance efforts, not environmental assistance efforts and maybe this bias should be made clear from the start.

II. Session Time

Set out below are my estimates of the times required for each session. Note that not all sessions listed in the Trainer’s Guide occurred as planned (indicated as “-“) and some sessions ran together (indicated as a start time on one line and a finish time on the following line).

Session	Start	Finish
Welcome/Day One	0945	0949
Introductions	0950	1012
Workshop Objectives	1013	1019
Break	1020	1027
Session 1.2 Introduction	1028	1032
Environment-Disaster Links	1033	1036
Exploration of Links	1037	1147
Cost of Failure	-	-
Conclusions	1148	1149
Session ? Overview of REA	1150	1234

Implementation Basics	1235	1300
Lunch		
Session 1.4 Introduction	1352	1435
Who are the disaster management actors?	1436	
Linking Disasters to Development		1500
Break		
1.5 Exercise	1540	
Presentations		1627
1.6 Feedback Review		1645
Introduction/Day Two	0847	0857
2.2 Purpose	0858	0940
2.3 Purpose and Outcome	0941	
Rating form 1		1034
Break	1034	1049
2.4 Purpose, Process and Outcome	1050	1102
Implementing Form 2	1103	1137
2.5 Purpose, Process and outcome	1138	1154
Sphere Guidelines	1154	1216
Lunch		
Assessment data/Sphere	1306	1410
2.6 Positive and negative Impacts	1412	
Purpose, process and outcome		1434
Implementing the module	1435	1503
Break	1504	1515
2.7 Participant Presentation	1515	1538
Participant Feedback/closing	1539	1541
Introduction (Day Three)	0840	0843
3.2 Community Level Assessment/Introduction	0844	
Presentation		1004
Group Exercise	1005	1028
Conclusion	1029	

Break		1045
3.3 Consolidation and Analysis/Welcome	1046	1102
Presentation	1103	1151
Lunch	1152	1252
Consolidation Practice	1252	
Case Example Group Work		
Conclusion		1329
3.4 Green Relief/Introduction	1330	
Presentation	1352	1404
Case Example and Discussion*	1404	1430
Break*	1430	1450
3.5 REA Implementation Issues/Techniques and Methodologies*	1450	
Participant Concerns*		1534
Evaluation and Closing	1534	1600

* Approximate times.

Annex 3: Participants' List

Participant List: CARE and Bistandstorget: Workshop 8-10.4.03

Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment in Disasters

Participants:

Name	Organisation	Address	Phone and fax	e-mail
Thale Kermit	Caritas Norway	Boks 5254 Majorstuen, N-0303 Oslo	T: +4723334364 F: +4723334361	thale@caritas.no
Knut Ragnar Johannessen	MAF Norway	Kirkeveien 25B, N-1363 Høvik	T: +4767839810 F: +4767839811	knutrj@frisurf.no
Campbell Day	Norwegian Forestry Group	Boks 123 Lilleaker, N-0216 Oslo	T: +4722518980 F: +4722518910	campbell.day@norskog.no
Dr. Alhaji S. Jeng	JORDFORSK	Fredrik A. Dahls vei 20A, N-1432 Ås	T: +4764948100 F: +4764948110	alhaji.jeng@jordforsk.no
Olav Myrholt	Utviklingsfondet (DF)	Landingsveien 102, N-0767 Oslo	T: +4791663542 F: +4722140001	deurali@online.no
Helle Fløisand	CARE Norge	Universitetsgt. 12, N-0164 Oslo	T: +4722992600 F: +4722992601	helle.floisand@care.no
Moira Eknes	CARE Norge	Universitetsgt. 12, N-0164 Oslo	T: +4722992600 F: +4722992601	moira.eknes@care.no
Steinar Sundvoll	CARE Norge	Universitetsgt. 12, N-0164 Oslo	T: +4722992600 F: +4722992601	steinar.sundvoll@care.no
Scott Solberg	Sun Mountain International			sunmountain@access.net.ec
Ginna Rakotoarimanana	CARE Madagascar	B.P. 1677 Antananarivo 103, Madagascar	T: +262320715517	sircat@dts.mg
Hanns Polak	Lutheran World Federation	150 Rt. de Ferney, CH1211- Geneva, Switzerland	T: +41227916427	hpp@lutheranworld.org
Jennifer Myton	PMAIB	West End, Roatan, Honduras	T: +5044451131 and +5049888295	jennymyton@yahoo.com

Facilitators:

Name	Organisation	Address	Phone and fax	e-mail
Paul Thompson	Interworks	116 North Few St., Madison, WI53103, USA	T: +16082519440 F: +16082519150	thompson@interworksmadison.co
C. Kelly	REA Advisor			72734.2412@compuserve.com
Becky Myton	CARE Honduras	Teguicigalpa, Honduras	T: +5042355055	myton@hon.care.org